

For over forty years the Wyoming Conference has provided scholarship assistance so members of the Conference could attend institutions higher education. For a good part of this period the assistance was for United Methodist colleges and universities only. In the 1980's the Conference voted to also provide assistance for advanced vocational education and training. Since there are no such institutions affiliated with the United Methodist Church, all scholarships were open to any college, university, or vocational institution.

Almost overnight the quality of applicants skyrocketed and the Scholarship Committee faced difficult decisions in the awarding of these funds. This was a problem with great blessings because the Wyoming Conference suddenly found itself working with the very best students in its membership. Over these years a number of students have provided vivid memories to those who worked on the Scholarship Committee.

I. A young man applied for a scholarship to attend college. His goal was to go to law school, then return home and spend the rest of his life in the political system improving his town. This young man's involvement with his church and the support it gave to him meant that his involvement would be of the highest order.

II. A nontraditional student applied for a scholarship to attend a community college. She was a single mother with a teen age daughter. We provided a scholarship to her. She graduated from the community college and then went on to complete her undergraduate degree. She did so well that she was INVITED to attend Columbia University and study for her Ph.D. This could not have happened without the assistance provided by the Wyoming Conference.

III. Another student applied for a scholarship, a woman who had recovered from breast cancer and attributed a good part of her recovery to art therapy during her cancer treatment. Her goal was to attend college, study art and seek a job as an art therapist so she could give to others what had saved her life. This woman had only recently become a member of the United Methodist Church.

IV. After the Conference voted to provide financial assistance to vocational students, we provided a scholarship for a young man to study carpentry. Upon completion of his advanced vocational training, he applied to us again for assistance to attend college so he could study business administration and start his own construction company properly. Certainly any of us would like to hire him and his company to do repair or building work for us.

These and other students were not awarded scholarships haphazardly. The Scholarship Committee's evaluation process was time consuming and rewarding for the committee members and the applicants alike. The Scholarship Committee spent several days conducting interviews, at the Conference office and at other sites within the Conference for the convenience of the applicants.

The return on the Conference's investment in these students cannot be analyzed in monetary terms, but the important influence for their future- and for ours- is obvious. And this has been true for over forty years!

Today the Conference ministry plan is unable to fund these scholarships directly. However, contributions to the Wyoming Conference Scholarship Fund for 2010 will provide scholarships during the last year of the Conference's existence. We will provide assistance for students who wish to attend colleges and universities AND vocational schools. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated and will have important ramifications for the church, the community, and future generations. Thank you.

Wyoming Conference
Scholarship Committee